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November 24, 2019

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ST. CROIX CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL TO REMAIN CLOSED NOVEMBER 25

Stakeholder campus walkthrough planned for Monday

ST. CROIX, USVI—The St. Croix Central High School will remain closed on Mon., Nov. 25, as Virgin Islands Department of Education officials and partner agencies continue to monitor the air quality on the school's campus.

An update from Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) officials on Sun., Nov. 24 indicated that EPA air-quality monitoring of the Central High campus that began on Fri., Nov. 22 has shown no harmful emission of gases on or near the campus.

As an added layer of caution, district officials say Nov. 25, which is a previously scheduled professional development half-day for St. Croix's secondary schools, will be used to gain feedback on the air quality at Central High from elected officials, union members, teachers, and parents who wish to attend a brief tour of the campus beginning at 9 a.m.

“Given all the work we have done on the Central High campus over the last two weeks and this weekend, we are taking an additional day to invite some of our stakeholders in to gain their feedback on the air quality,” Education Commissioner Racquel Berry-Benjamin said. “Implementing a double-session schedule is a last resort and we are making every effort to avoid disrupting students' schedules, as much as we possibly can.”

As part of the effort to identify the cause of the gaseous odor that began impacting the Central High campus on Nov. 12, clogged sewer lines on and near the campus were flushed and deodorized, a plant root near campus sewer lines was uprooted, an area around a manhole on the campus was sealed, and an oil spill that occurred from heavy equipment on the campus was cleaned.

Central High is expected to reopen and resume normal operations on Tues., Nov. 26, pending the results of Monday's walkthrough.

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